

Independent Evaluation of the NYS Tobacco Control Program
RFP 1110110505

Questions and Answers

All questions are stated as received in the TCP Bureau Mail Log by the deadline. The TCP is not responsible for any errors or misinterpretation of any questions received.

The responses to questions included herein are the official responses by the State to questions posted by potential bidders and are hereby incorporated into the RFP 1110110505 issued on September 12, 2012. In the event of any conflict between the RFP and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

Clarification: The following information clarifies discrepancies on pages 20 and 23 of the RFP:

1. Page 23: Responses to this solicitation should be clearly marked, "Independent Evaluation RFP 1110110505" and directed to:

Patricia Bubniak
Tobacco Control Program
New York State Department of Health
ESP Corning Tower, Room 1055
Albany, NY 12237-0676

It is the bidders' responsibility to see that bids are delivered to Room 1055 prior to the date and time of the bid due date. Late bids due to delay by the carrier or not received in the Department's mail room in time for transmission to room 1055 will not be considered.

2. Page 20 of the RFP asks that bidders make copies of the bid form for each year of the proposal. The bid form (Attachment 3) includes each year, making copying of the form unnecessary.

1. The numbering of deliverables starting on page 10 of the RFP differs from those in Attachment 3 beginning on page 39. It appears those on in Attachment 3 are correct. Please verify that these are the numbers we should reference.

Answer: The numbering of deliverables in Attachment 3 is correct. The numbering of some deliverables in the body of the RFP (starting on page 10), is incorrect. The deliverables in the body of the RFP should be labeled as follows:

- Deliverable 1 – Security Plan (begins on page 10)
- Deliverable 2 – Evaluation Studies (begins on page 10)

Deliverable 3 – Surveillance Activities (begins on page 12)
Deliverable 4 – Web-based Monitoring System (begins on page 16)
Deliverable 5 – Reports and Manuscripts (begins on page 17)

2. The initial period of performance is from January, 2013 through March 31, 2014. For deliverable 3a (NY ATS), should we assume that data collection will occur for 5 quarters during this period or should we allow one quarter of time at the start of the contract to allow for review and revision of the ATS instrument?

Answer: The first term of the five-year contract is for 15 months (January 13, 2013 through March 31, 2014); all subsequent terms will be for a one year period (April 1 – March 31). Bidders should calculate costs for the first term for 15 months. Bidders should consider the first three months of the first term as a start up period to allow for review and revision of the ATS instrument and other instruments.

3. On page 19 of the RFP there is a reference to briefings, conference calls, face-to-face meetings, presentations and publications, and quarterly Advisory Board meetings. Although there is reference to management briefings and publications under Deliverable 5 (Reports and Manuscripts), it is not clear under what deliverables we would budget for conference calls, face-to-face meetings, and attendance at Advisory Board meetings.

Answer: Bid price must reflect all costs, including those associated with personnel, travel, materials and services, and miscellaneous expenses. For purposes of this RFP, costs should be determined for each of the deliverables listed in Requirements and Deliverables including all personnel, materials, telecommunications, travel and service costs related to each. Staff time and travel costs for advisory board meetings do not belong to a single deliverable but are expected; vendors may choose to distribute these costs in a way that makes sense for their organization.

4. The RFP states on page 9 that the proposed staffing plan must include a full-time project coordinator and a full-time evaluation liaison. Is it possible to budget for 1 full-time equivalent for each of these positions by having two staff share the project coordinator duties and two staff share the evaluation liaison position? Some of the duties for each of these positions may require someone with more extensive experience, while other duties may be simpler and more suitable for someone with less experience. Such a plan would be more efficient and ensure that staff are performing tasks that match their skills and experience.

Answer: No. The intent of the staffing plan required in the RFP is to maintain excellent communication between the vendor and the Tobacco Control Program and to ensure effective coordination of the project. The project coordinator and the evaluation liaison will be the primary contacts between the vendor and the Tobacco Control Program. These positions represent the vendor in all issues related to the contract. The evaluation liaison is expected to travel to Albany regularly. The project coordinator will assure overall

coordination and integration of the project. Having more than one staff person serve in these critical positions would undermine the intent of this requirement.

5. Related to the full-time project coordinator, it is not clear under which deliverables(s) their time should be budgeted as their duties may benefit multiple deliverables. One option is to spread their hours across all deliverables. Alternatively, a project management and coordination task could be created with project management related deliverables (e.g., progress reports).

Related to the full-time evaluation liaison, it is not clear under which deliverable(s) their time should be budgeted. Much of the time for the evaluation liaison would likely be budgeted for the web-based reporting system, but it is not clear if that is where all of their time and travel should be budgeted (i.e., deliverable 4) since that task does not necessarily require one full-time equivalent.

Answer: Bid price must reflect all costs, including those associated with personnel, travel, materials and services, and miscellaneous expenses. As long as all costs are reflected in the bid price, vendors may choose to distribute these costs in a way that makes sense for their organization. The creation of a new task or deliverable is not allowable.

6. Page 20 of the RFP requires “audited financial statements for the last three (3) years of operations.” Are audited financial statements required from subcontractors?

Answer: Audited financial statements must be included for any subcontractors whose subcontract is valued at over \$100,000.

If the subcontractor(s) is known at the time the proposal is submitted and the value of the subcontract is over \$100,000, three years of audited financial statements must be included. As stated in the RFP, upon award, any proposed subcontractors must be approved by the NYS Department of Health. If a subcontractor is chosen after the contract is executed, the proposed subcontractor must be approved by the NYS Department of Health and must include satisfactory evidence that it has sufficient financial capacity to perform the type, magnitude and quality of services sought.